



GOVERNOR'S BRIDGE RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

Governor's Bridge Neighbourhood Newsletter – September 2020

Key subjects: 5 minute read

- City Hall resources
- **GBRA Membership dues are due**
- GBRA Online Resources
- Neighbourhood Watch – Protect and Connect
- Governor's Bridge Lookout Revitalization Project
- Discovery Walks Program and StrollTO
- Watch your Speed Program and Traffic Safety
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- North Slope Restoration – Toronto Brickworks
- Tall Homes Committee of Adjustment
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- The Next Normal - Be kind to yourself and your neighbours

COVID-19 is affecting all of us in Governor's Bridge. All of our lives are in a Great Reset mode because of COVID-19. The GBRA works everyday to improve the quality of life in our community.

We're pleased to present an update on all of the improvement projects that the Board and volunteers are working on in this Fall newsletter update. We encourage you to reach out, comment, and bring forward your questions and ideas, **because it takes a community to build a community.**

If you need help from City Hall:

Councillor Layton and Angela Surdi work every day to look after the best interests of Governor's Bridge residents.

If you have a minute, please bookmark <https://mikelayton.to> for important updates relating to the COVID-19 updates, the City of Toronto, and our GBRA community website, www.governorsbridge.net.

If you have an idea or concern, please share it with a GBRA Board member and Angela Surdi, Senior Advisor to Councillor Layton – Angela.Surdi@toronto.ca.

GBRA Membership dues are due

To continue to help you, we need you to be a member of the GBRA. Over half of our residents are members.

2020/2021 annual membership dues are now due. Please contribute \$40 to help support all that the GBRA does for our community.

Please **send an e-transfer to jeffhanemaayer@gmail.com** or drop off cash or a cheque **payable to the Governor's Bridge Ratepayers Association** or mail your dues to:

Jeff Hanemaayer
GBRA Treasurer
15 Governor's Road
M4W 2E9

Your GBRA Online Resources

Take time to get to know your community via:

[GBRA Website](#)

[GBRA's Private Facebook group](#)

nextdoor.com

Neighbourhood Watch – Protect and Connect:

In October 2020, the **Neighbourhood Watch – Protect and Connect** program will launch in Governor’s Bridge.

Long-time residents and GBRA Board members, Aprile Royal and George Paradi, will be managing the program with volunteer Street Captains helping on each street.

The goals of the program are to:

- work together as a community, with Councillor Layton’s team (Angela Surdi – angela.surdi@toronto.ca), and 53rd Division of the Toronto Police (Timothy Somers - Timothy.Somers@torontopolice.on.ca) to enhance neighbourhood security and follow-up effectively on neighbourhood incidents.
- encourage **all** Governor’s Bridge neighbours - if they “**see something**” to “**say something**” by e-mailing their respective Street Captains about suspicious activities or people.
- encourage homeowners in Governor’s Bridge **to get to know their neighbours**.
- offer assistance to neighbours in Governor’s Bridge where possible, should an emergency situation arise.

Each street in Governor’s Bridge will have a volunteer Street Captain(s) who will reach out to you to confirm if you’d like to participate in the program, record your e-mail address (which will remain private), and confirm if you have video surveillance on your property.

The Street Captain’s role is to:

- Educate neighbours about the GBRA Neighbourhood Watch program and act as a liaison between residents on their street, the GBRA, and 53rd Division.
- Maintain an up-to-date e-mail contact list of residents on the street.
- Collect information about suspicious local activity and crime-related incidents.
- Pass on relevant emergency and crime-related information to residents on their assigned street.

Important note: Neighbourhood Watch does not replace the City of Toronto’s 911 service.

Please remember:

- **An emergency** is a situation where personal safety or property is at risk – e.g. fire, crime in progress, medical emergency, or domestic violence. If you observe an emergency – **call 911**.
- **If you need to contact the police about a situation that is not an emergency**, call the police at 416-808-2222.
- **You can report online:** To report theft, fraud, property damage, damage to vehicles, theft from vehicles, graffiti (non-hate), or speeders, visit www.torontopolice.on.ca/core.
- **If there are ongoing issues** such as nuisance issues, trespassing, noise complaints, call 53rd Division - 416-808-5300 - and ask for a complaint form.

- **If you want to remain anonymous and have ANY important information on a crime: please visit www.222tips.com or call 1-808-222-8477.**

Exciting News:

In these times of self-isolation, we know there is a lot of talent at home – looking to volunteer or help out with area projects. We welcome your expertise and involvement in the following projects to make Governor’s Bridge a great place to live in the City of Toronto.

Here’s a sampling of the major projects the GBRA is working on.

1) Governor’s Bridge Lookout Revitalization Project at the Don Valley Brick Works Park:

The Governor’s Bridge Lookout is set to become a major look forward to and we’re encouraging all homeowners to visit the [project Web site](#) to learn more about how this could become one of Toronto’s best lookouts, how you can get involved, and potentially contribute as a donor to this exciting program.

If you have ideas or thoughts after learning more about this project, please send them to greentoronto@toronto.ca and chris@moveable.com.

2) Revival of the Discovery Walks program for North Toronto and StrollTO:

Discussions are underway with Councillor Layton to find the necessary talent resources and funds to re-launch of the [City of Toronto’s Discovery Walks program](#).

StrollTO: COVID-19 intends to build new interest in strolling and discovering all that Ward 11 and beyond has to offer. StrollTO is in the process of launching and will feature walks in each of the City’s Wards over time. We encourage you to let your fingers do the walking over to the [StrollTO site](#) for new walking ideas.

3) Traffic management (Vision Zero) and Watch Your Speed Program in Governor’s Bridge

The GBRA Board and Councillor Layton’s team are working with the City of Toronto’s in October 2020.

In addition, the GBRA Board has confirmed that it cannot buy a Kalitec speed sign and move it around our streets with the City’s help. Instead, we’re working closely with the Mateen Mahboubi at [City of Toronto’s Watch Your Speed Program](#), to install city signage to generate data (no doubt you’ve seen the first local sign north bound on Bayview near Loblaw’s).

The goal of working with Councillor Layton and the City's *Watch Your Speed Program* (WYSP) is to find ways to tame speeders on Bayview and build an open data model to obtain more police resources to make streets in our area safer to walk, bike, and drive on.

4) Ravine Strategy

COVID-19 has shown all of us how important being outdoors is and having safe parks and places to walk and ride our bikes.

As TD Bank has confirmed, Toronto's ravines are a big part of the City's lungs and are worth \$7 billion. Protecting the ravines, keeping them clean, and limiting invasive species must be a common goal for all residents of Toronto and Governor's Bridge.

Creating the [Don River Valley Park Trails](#) and [the Loop Trail](#) are key legacy projects that everyone who lives in Governor's Bridge should participate in - to make sure that our children have green assets in their future - to enjoy.

If you're a forestry or green asset expert, we need your help making sure that the City of Toronto can manage this all-important asset. Please reach out to one of our Board members to volunteer and join a multi-resident association group that will tackle the future planning of this amazing asset - the Don Valley Ravine system.

5) ICYMI - Proposed Don Valley Layover Facility:

Over the last few weeks, you've received a direct mail piece from Metrolinx about the proposed **Don Valley Layover Facility**. We'd encourage you to visit these URLs to understand the impact that this maintenance/sewage facility will have on the Don River Valley, ravines and waterways.

The GBRA is actively working with FoNTRA, the 5RAs (Residents' Associations: NRRRA, SRRRA, Moore Park RA, and Summerhill RA), Evergreen Brickworks, TRCA, and your neighbours to understand the impact that this facility will have on the Don Valley, Don Valley Trail, and the critical Don River Valley Park.

We'd encourage you to reach out to the GBRA, Councillor Layton, and MPP Jessica Bell to share your thoughts and ideas about Metrolinx's plans:

[GO Expansion Notice of Commencement-Sept 8, 2020](#)

[Don Valley Layover Composite-Aug 13, 2020](#)

[The Star: Planned GO train facility could undermine years of Don Valley restoration efforts, conservationists warn-Sept 3, 2020](#)

6) North Slope Restoration – Toronto Brickworks

Several Governor's Bridge residents on Douglas Crescent have expressed deep concern about the North Slope at the Brickworks.

The primary issues are:

- Informal foot traffic, mountain biking, and off-leash dogs – causing extensive slope erosion and loss of vegetation
- Vandalism and disregard of signs and fencing on the upper ridge
- Fires, including the burning of fences and fire pits without water access to stop fires
- Prohibited use by day camps and school groups
- Trespassing through private property – especially onto Douglas Crescent
- Rough living

Upon receipt of information about the problems developing on the North Slope, the GBRA assembled a North Slope Preservation sub-committee of Chuck and Robin Konkel, Jeffrey Smyth, Ernst Becker, George Paradi, and Richard Brightling to ensure that improvements were made to protect this geological wonder and the properties that adjoin the North Slope.

A full report was completed by the City of Toronto and new signage was installed to discourage walking and bike traffic at the top of the North Slope. Special thanks to Cheryl Post, City of Toronto Urban Forestry, and Angela Surdi for reacting swiftly to address this issue, and installing new signage and wood barriers to reduce walking and biking traffic at the top of the North Slope - and of course, their continuing efforts to improve this site.

7) Tall Homes – Committee of Adjustment:

If you're considering a home restoration project or a new build, please reach out and connect with the GBRA before going to the Committee of Adjustment. Remember, two things in life that you do not get to choose – “your parents and your neighbours.” Happy neighbours make for a happy neighbourhood and the GBRA has worked on several projects to try and achieve the best possible outcomes “for all” - when new builds or restorations are in play.

Here's [background on the CoA process](#).

Another major file that the GBRA is watching very closely is the City of Toronto's Yellowbelt discussions.

If you'd like to learn more about the City of Toronto's program to densify the downtown, please visit <https://toronto.uli.org/programs/urban-leadership-program/class-of-2020>.

Efforts have started to help the City of Toronto with the backlog of CoA requests caused by COVID-19 and going online for hearings.

8) From 1967 on: Community Gatherings

For 53 years, we've come together at Nesbitt Park to celebrate our community and living in Governor's Bridge.

Sadly, because of COVID-19, we cannot celebrate together this year. As Karri Paradi and her army of volunteers have done for many years, we attempted to nudge our Community BBQ format without success and then the Community Movie Night also fell prey to new provincial restrictions after a lot of work had been done on getting permits, event liability insurance, and movie rights. City of Toronto staff were amazing in trying to help us get the Movie Night on the go this year to continue the tradition.

During this process, we were reminded by Mary Hainsworth why this year's event is so important to our community. Mary wrote: "the very first corn roast was in 1967 and it was a Movie Night. The event was called The Opening, to celebrate the road allowance for the ravine next to 21 Douglas Crescent. Since it was a Centennial year, the children dressed up in costume and had a great little parade."

Fast-forward to today, and many of us are housebound and pondering second careers in education. The good news is that we did get more picnic tables for Nesbitt Park (September 25th) - **so if you want to keep the "bulldog experience of the GBRA alive" - take the opportunity while the weather allows to enjoy a picnic in Nesbitt Park - physically distanced of course.**

9) The Next Normal

Finally, we all know that the Great Reset is upon us because of COVID-19, and no one knows what the Next Normal will look like. You can rest assured that the GBRA has more members than we've ever had, and that we intend to continue to seek improvement wherever possible in this great community to build connection between neighbours.

Our hope is that you will reach out to your neighbours and connect. And maybe find new innovative ways to promote human connection like www.genwellproject.org is doing.

You may also really enjoy Evergreen's Future Cities program called Unexpected Solutions. Last year's event was great and this year's event is virtual and is free.
<https://unexpectedsolutions.futurecitiescanada.ca>.

Be well,

Your 2020/21 GBRA Board of Directors:

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